

# ONLY FORMS 4 & 5 CAN RETURN TO CLASSROOMS

SEE PAGES 8 - 9



*Female parliamentarians came together recently for a workshop to review legislation that affects women and other marginalized groups – such as The Sexual Offences Act, The Domestic Violence Act and The Marriage Act, to name just a few. They also looked at proposed legislation to deal with some common issues affecting women, such as sexual harassment and post-partum depression. [READ THE FULL STORY ON PAGE 5]*

- INSIDE:**
- ABLP shows consideration for exhausted grave diggers
  - Champion female bodybuilder to be made an Ambassador!
  - El Drivel: More Lies than Love in Lovell

# Shoppers facing empty shelves and rising prices as global supply chain crisis tipped to worsen

Empty shelves, rising prices and long delays.

Global supply chains are in chaos, and consumers around the world are being warned to expect fewer presents under the Christmas tree this year.

Already severely affected by the pandemic, the vast, interconnected and delicately tuned network of factories, ports, container ships, trucks and rail lines has been unable to keep up with a rapid rebound in demand.

It has been described as a perfect storm of events – lockdowns, labour shortages, extreme weather – that is affecting supply lines of everything from food and drinks to clothing, books, electronics and toys.

In the US, container ships sit off the coast for weeks unable to

unload their cargo. Shoppers have flooded social media with pictures of empty shelves at retailers like Walmart, while fast-food restaurants have pulled menu items due to lack of ingredients. Meanwhile, CNN has grimly warned Americans not to expect things to go back to the way there were “in the Before Times”.

In the UK, families have been told they may have to do without turkeys for Christmas dinner, while retail bosses say they plan to bring promotions forward by a month to avoid December shelf shortages.

On Monday, ratings agency Moody’s Analytics warned the global supply chain disruptions would “get worse before they get better”.


“As the global economic recovery continues to gath-

er steam, what is increasingly apparent is how it will be stymied by supply chain disruptions that are now showing up at every corner,” Moody’s wrote in the report. “Border controls and mobility restrictions, unavailability of a global vaccine pass, and pent-up de-

mand from being stuck at home have combined for a perfect storm where global production will be hampered because deliveries are not made in time, costs and prices will rise and GDP growth worldwide will not be as robust as a result.”

Moody’s said the


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“weakest link” may be the shortage of truck drivers – an issue that has particularly affected the UK, causing massive fuel shortages as petrol stations run dry.

Now there is serious concern among global finance officials – who gathered in Washington on Wednesday – that the supply chain bottlenecks, which are already driving prices higher, threaten to derail the post-COVID economic recovery.

The World Bank

estimates 8.5 per cent of global container shipping is stalled in or around ports, twice as much as in January.

The bottlenecks are driving sharp increases in shipping fees and the final cost of goods, and World Bank President David Malpass warned that some of the price spikes “will not be transitory”.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Kristalina Georgieva said the lag in vaccination rates to contain the pandemic in

developing nations was contributing to the supply constraints, and “as long as it widens this risk of interruptions in global supply chains is going to be higher”.

Speaking to CNN, Moody’s chief economist Mark Zandi said the Delta variant has been a major factor in the supply chain disruptions – citing an example of Malaysian semiconductor plants shutting down due to workers being sick, resulting in shortages

of vehicle manufacturing.

“The pandemic itself has just really made things a jumbled mess,” he said.

More people stuck at home buying “all kinds of stuff” meant more pressure on the system, he added.

“You got all this stuff coming through the pipe, and the pipe is being disrupted by the pandemic, and that results in this jumbled mess,” he said.

*(Reprinted / Abridged from news.com.au)*

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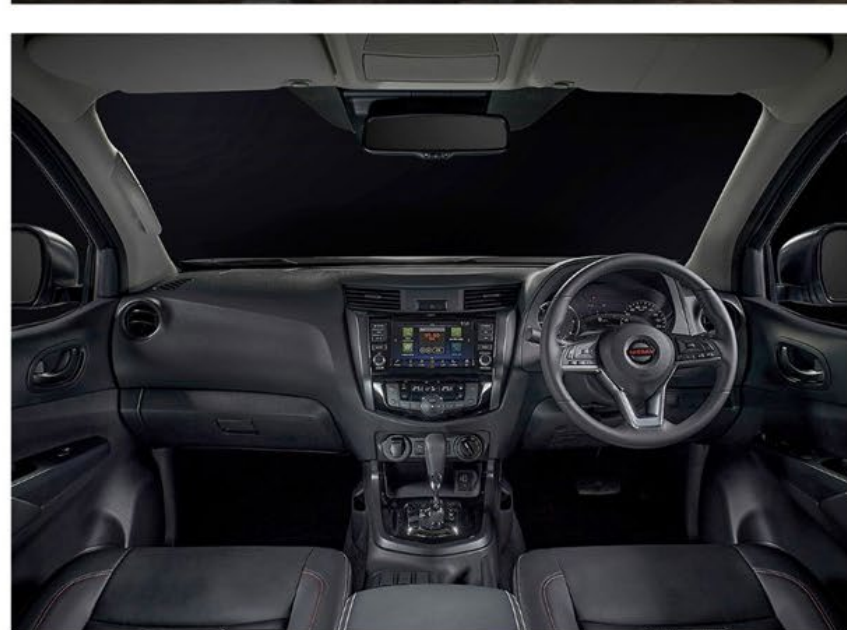
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# Workshop on gender-based review of legislation concludes

A workshop that looked at legislation affecting women and other marginalized groups has concluded in St. John's. Organised by the Antigua and Barbuda Network of Women Parliamentarians (Parliament Gender Caucus) the legislative workshop brought together women from across the political divide in the country.

The all-day session involved taking a gendered approach to reviewing legislation affecting women and marginalized groups in Antigua & Barbuda.

The Sexual Offences Act 1995, Domestic Violence Act 2015, Offences Against the Person Act 1873 (Abortion), and the Marriage Act 1925 were some of the laws that were reviewed. Proposed legislation related to sexual harassment,



*Participants at the recent workshop.*

women's mental health, postpartum depression, and medical discrimination, were also addressed.

A proposal with the suggested changes will be presented to the Minister of Legal Affairs, Steadroy Benjamin, as well as private members' bills, will be submitted to the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda.

President of the Senate Alincia Williams-Grant floated the idea to create a Gender Caucus in the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda as a Standing Committee so as to

provide an opportunity for women parliamentarians (past & present) to unite, irrespective of political party affiliation, to ensure equality for all with an emphasis on gender equality and marginalized groups.

The caucus would also provide a forum to exchange ideas, support one another on issues of common concern and work collectively to advance gender-responsive policies and laws in Antigua & Barbuda.

The mission of this body would be the integration of a gender-responsive

environment into legislative action in order to foster peace, sustainable democracy, and economic development.

This workshop is the first step of the Network of Women Parliamentarians in Antigua and Barbuda to effect change and ensure that the laws of the nation facilitate gender equality, and that equity is addressed in their design and implementation

Women Against Rape (WAR Inc) assisted with coordinating the workshop.

# Consideration shown to grave diggers by ABLP

by Shelton Daniel

The Constituency Branches that make up Zone 1 of the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP), this week engaged in a novel compassionate activity: extending what they term “appreciation assistance” to grave diggers.

The first such activity took place at midday on Monday October 10 at Valley Church.

Zone 1 of the ABLP includes four constituencies: St. John’s Rural North; St. John’s Rural East; St. John’s City East; and St. John’s City West.

Claudette Mason is the Zone 1 chairperson. She said the idea came out of conversations with the grave diggers during the course of funerals when it became apparent that they are mentally

drained by this very demanding task.

Mason said the grave diggers, who are officially employed by the Central Board of Health (CBH), are also fatigued by the increased frequency with which they must dig graves due to the sharply increased number of burials caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in recent weeks.

“Most of all, they sometimes need some water and food,” Mason, a retired senior police officer, told *Pointe Xpress*. “We got together as a group and discussed with our GS [general secretary] and she gave us the green light. We started last Monday, bringing lunches and water. Luckily, we got a sponsor for [today, Friday 15 October], so they’re getting lunch twice for this



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week.” She disclosed that Monday’s lunch was sponsored by the Soup Kitchen of City West, while the water was provided by Rural North. A rotational system is adopted within the Zone, meaning the responsibility will next fall to City East and Rural East.

“Sometimes they can’t even find a spot to bury someone,” Mason pointed out, highlighting that the diggers sometimes put tremendous effort into manually excavating the ground for a grave, only to find

that it had previously been used and thus have to begin all over again. She said the ABLP Zone 1 aims to feed the grave diggers twice a week, initially, but once the resources become available, this could be increased to three or four times weekly.

“We are also trying to get them a counselor, based on their explanations to us as to what is happening to them,” Mason revealed.

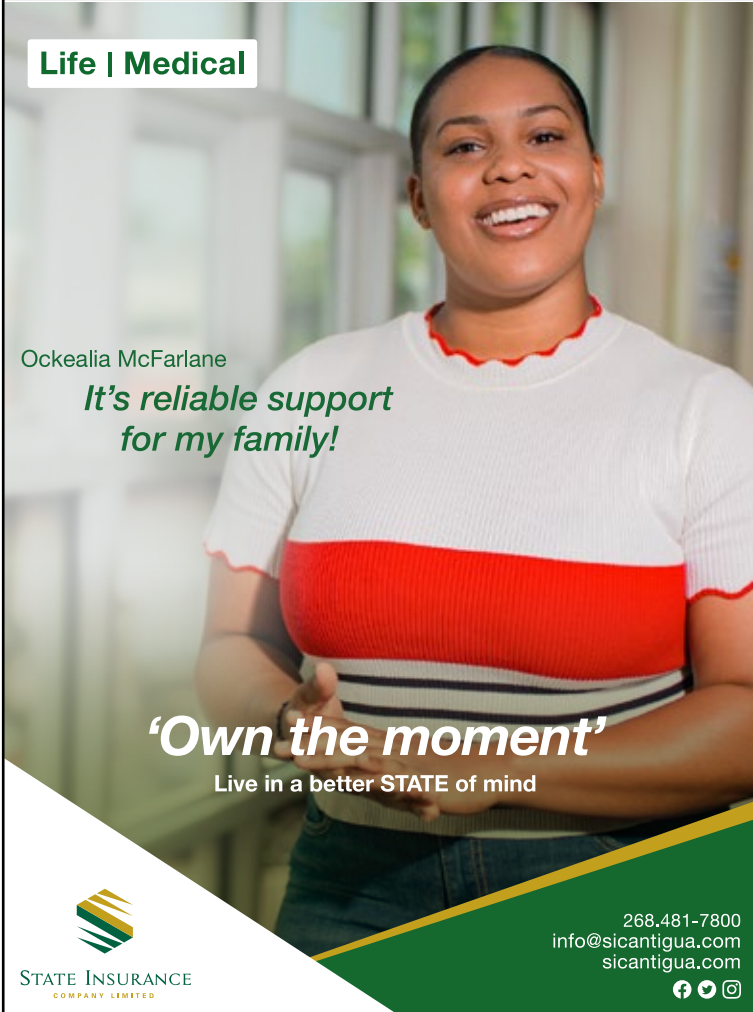
She said seven grave diggers are presently being attended to by the

ABLP Zone.

Pictures show the food and water do-

nations being assembled and distributed.


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# Schools remain in limbo; limited return to classrooms

by *Shelton Daniel*

Schools will, for the most part, remain closed in terms of physical attendance, but secondary school students of Forms 4 and 5, who are facing examinations, will be allowed to resume face-to-face or in-classroom learning as of next week.

This was one of the decisions coming out of this week's Cabinet meeting following recommendations made by the Director of Education, Clare Browne.

It is based on the current vaccination status of teachers and students, said to be 85% in the case of the former and a little over 62% in the case of the 8,000 minors in the 12-17 year age range – and who would account for those of secondary school age and enrolment.

According to the post-Cabinet briefing notes, “More

than 85% of all teachers have been vaccinated; and, more than 5,000 of the eligible 8,000 12-to-17 year-olds have also been vaccinated.”

It was further disclosed that, “The President and General Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda Union of Teachers (ABUT) were invited to Cabinet. It was affirmed that 85% of teachers have been vaccinated in the public schools, and that 100% vaccination has been achieved in many private schools. At the College level, 83% of teachers have been vaccinated. Special attention is to be paid to physically challenged students who require face-to-face instructions. The Adele School is expected to continue receiving its full student body, and 100% of its teachers are reportedly vaccinated.”



But the risk is, at this stage, considered still too great for primary schools, and they will therefore remain shuttered for the time being, until further notice.

“Based on the vulnerability of primary school students – and based on other data regarding the vaccination of their teachers – primary schools shall remain a distance-learning

experience,” said the notes prepared and disseminated by the Prime Minister's chief-of-staff, Ambassador Lionel Hurst.

The country is experiencing an apparent slowing in the rate of new infections, and a notable reduction in active cases of the disease – plus a welcome slowdown in the associated mortality.

“There have been



two consecutive days of decline in the number of new cases of COVID patients, and there have not been any COVID-19 deaths over the same period,” the notes observe.

Another 25,000 of the local population still need to be fully inoculated in order to reach the 80,000 required for national collective (herd) immunity.

The Government says that with more-than-adequate stocks of vaccines (from multiple approved brands) available in the country, there is no excuse for any eligible adult not to get vaccinated pronto.

It therefore warned that “no exemption [from mandatory vaccination] will be granted to any adult based on the un-availability of any specific vaccine.

“For those physicians who seek to provide medical exemptions on flimsy and un-substantiated grounds, the Cabinet reminds that fines and the possible loss of the license to practice medicine are looming likelihoods.”

Pertaining to teachers, the subject of exemptions was also touched on by Education Director Clare Browne during his participation in the live post-Cabinet press

briefing on Thursday morning.

“There are other teachers who are making application for exemption – religious exemption and medical exemption. Now we cannot assume that all the applicants are going to be favorably considered. So once the process goes through and the results are returned, then we will know who have not made it, and if they didn’t get exemption, whether or not they are going to be returning – they are going to take the vaccine and return to the classroom – or they just would not take the vaccine.”

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# Government refutes claims of land giveaway

Opposition inspired claims that the government has embarked on a 'give-away' of large tracks of lands have been strongly rejected by the government.

There has been growing controversy surrounding these claims with the leader of the United Progressive Party, Harold Lovell, being among those who have made the charge.

However, during Thursday's post-Cabinet Press Briefing, Information Minister Melford Nicholas, said the 'furor' that has been created over the alleged land-giveaway is nothing but 'a false alarm'. He said the lands in question – over 500 acres in the Seaforth area near Five Islands – were not crown lands and were in fact acquired through private hands.

Nicholas noted that the government went to parliament recently to amend the Special Economic Zones legislation to allow for the reduction in size of lands required for the establishment of these zones. Previously, it required a minimum of 1,500 acres for these special zones. The amendments brought that amount down to 500. Under the amendment, an investor has approached the government with plans to establish one such economic zone at the Seaforth area. He revealed that the government gave the greenlight for the project to proceed, noting that it would bring significant benefits to the country.

He noted that under the previous UPP administration, the same lands were earmarked for a major tourism development which never materialized.

"It's not like that area has not been earmarked for large scale development before. In the previous administration, the leader of the UPP, Lovell, would recall that he had touted that area for a development called Azure Project to be a multi-scale tourism project. It never came to fruition, but at the same time the UPP leader is giving the public the impression that we have given away the lands. Nothing could be further from the truth. These are private lands, much like the lands acquired by Yida were acquired under the previous administration from private sources," Nicholas explained.

The Information Minister also recalled that after Yida received the 'greenlight' to proceed with the project, there were much criticisms vented in the public domain stating that the project would result in much environmental and other degradation. This, he noted, has not happened. Instead, he added, significant developments are taking place within the Yida project which will redound to the benefit of the entire country.

Nicholas also gave, as an example, the American University of Antigua (AUA) which has been established within the Free Trade Zone at Coolidge. He further explained that while the university benefits from much of the concessions under the zone, its operation has been a positive impact on the overall economy of Antigua and Barbuda with the spinoffs from its students through rental of accommodations, motor vehicles, and their patronage

of restaurants and other such establishments.

According to the minister, these special economic zones are part of the economic infrastructure which is being put in place to secure the future economic growth of Antigua and Barbuda.

Meanwhile, an agreement between the UPP Administration and Millennia-Montaigne Developments (Antigua) Ltd. has been made public. The agreement was signed on July 26, 2011, by representatives of the company and then UPP Finance Minister Harold Lovell.

In fact, the records show that over several years, the project appeared in the annual Budget Statement delivered to the parliament when Lovell held the finance portfolio in that administration. The land was the subject of litigation for some time but even after that was settled, the UPP administration still pinned much hope on its start-up to help change the country's economic fortunes.

"Whereas Yida invested US\$200M to date, this project which Harold bragged about for several years, never yielded a cent in investment. Notwithstanding, in excess of \$11M was waived by UPP/Harold et al, to transfer the title. The government and people lost \$11M in taxes and got nothing in return," declared one government source.

Additionally, the source noted that the concessions granted to the developer of the proposed economic zone are like those the UPP had granted to the Azure Project.



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# MEDIA NOTICE: Road Rehabilitation Night Works

Kindly note the following with regards to the facilitation of APUA pipe crossings on Valley Road North (VRN) under the Second Road Infrastructure Road Rehabilitation Project (SRIRP).

The attention of the general public is drawn to the fact that C.O. Williams Construction Ltd. will be carrying out pipe crossings to facilitate APUA works on Valley Road North during curfew hours which are 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. on Thursday 14 October 2021, and 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. thereafter – until further notice.

These crossings will result in a full closure of the road. However, single-lane traffic will be in effect for light vehicles and emergency vehicles only.

The schedule and location of the works is as follows:

**Thursday 14th October 2021** — from Jolly Beach entrance to Valley Church.

**Friday 15th October 2021** - from Jolly Beach entrance to Valley Church.

**Saturday 16th October 2021** - from Valley Church to Ffryes Beach.

**Monday 18th October 2021** - from Valley Church to Ffryes Beach.

**Tuesday 19th October 2021** - Bolans between the bridge and the Bolans Police Station.

Please note that this schedule is subject to

change, based on weather conditions. Initially, the published schedule called for the completion of these crossings on the night of Tuesday 12th October 2021. Should the

weather force a cancellation of the closure on the night of 14th October 2021, the schedule will shift accordingly. Please note that no closure is scheduled on Sunday 17th

October 2021.

All road users are asked to comply with the traffic management measures and proceed with extreme caution while traversing the construction site.

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A minimum of 5 years work experience managing an accounting department is a requirement. Priority will be given to qualified applicants with wholesale and retail experience.

# Female national bodybuilder approved for appointment as an Ambassador



## *Kimberly Percival*

Antiguan Kimberly Percival, who won an international bodybuilding competition held earlier this year in Spain, is to be appointed as an Ambassador-at-Large and furnished with a diplomatic passport.

Percival, a veteran high achiever in the sport, was invited to Cabinet at its weekly meeting on Wednesday.

Sports Minister Daryl Matthew noted that “clinging of the first-place win in the international competition has put Antigua and Barbuda in a place of high repute, and has made Kimberly Percival’s face recognizable in the important circles of fitness and health globally.

“She has been interviewed by television and magazines

with global audiences, and is extremely articulate. The Minister of Tourism agreed that Kimberly Percival would be an asset to the global promotion program of Antigua and Barbuda ...

“It was proposed [and agreed] that she be conferred the title of Ambassador-at-Large and provided with a diplomatic passport.”

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# For the Caribbean, relations with the US and China is not one or the other



**By Sir Ronald Sanders**

*(The writer is Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London and Massey College in the University of Toronto. The views expressed are entirely his own)*

On October 12, more than a dozen representatives in the US Congress sent a letter to the US Trade Representative (USTR), Katherine

Tai, asking for immediate attention to what they describe as “the growing influence of the Chinese Communist Party in both Latin America and the Caribbean trade and economic development”.

The US Congress persons have come to this realization years after Caribbean representatives in Washington – me included – have been saying to successive US governments and Congress that the US has been absent as a meaningful contributor to the Caribbean's develop-

ment for almost two decades.

The vacuum that the US left has been filled by the Peoples Republic of China, and it would be unreasonable for the US government or Congress to expect Caribbean countries to defer or delay their urgent development needs, waiting for the US to refocus its attention on the region.

Further, the terms of China's loans to many Caribbean nations have been far more concessionary even than World Bank and IMF loans to lower and lower middle-income countries, and China does not use per capita income as a criterion for disqualifying high income but vulnerable and underdeveloped Caribbean countries from eligibility for loans and grants.

US Congress persons and US Government policy makers should take these realities into account when they say, as they did to the US Trade

Representative, “Economic prosperity and solidified trading relationships are slowly becoming a matter of national security.”

Caribbean countries do not regard the loans and other economic arrangements they have with China as a threat to US national security, and no member state of CARICOM has put any policies or programmes in place that affect US national security. Indeed, CARICOM countries have remained faithful to importing goods and services from the US, even though US assistance and investment in the sub-region has steadily declined.

Here are a few facts of which the 13 US Congress persons, who signed the 12 October letter, appear to be unaware. First, with the exception of Haiti (which for the US is a special case), the 14-nation independent states of the Caribbean Community have been at the bottom of US official

development assistance for decades. In 2019, for instance, total US foreign assistance globally was US\$47 billion, of which all CARICOM countries received US\$338 million or 0.7%. For emphasis, that is less than 1% of the global total. Haiti alone received US\$268 million of that US\$338 million delivered to all 14 CARICOM states, leaving the other 13 to share US\$70 million only. For nine of the 13 countries, the sum provided did not amount to US\$1 million.

On trade, the US remained the dominant trading partner of CARICOM states, enjoying a trade surplus of US\$6.5 billion. So, while it is factual that trade between Caribbean countries and China has increased in recent years, no trade in goods with the US was displaced, and certainly no trade in services. And, on foreign assistance to the region, if China is now delivering more to the Caribbean than the US, it should hardly be a matter of complaint by the US.

Among the referenc-

es made about China is that its representatives use sharp practices in negotiating contracts with Caribbean countries which could lead to seizure of vital infrastructure should defaults occur on repayment of loans. These references suggest that representatives of Caribbean countries lack the skill to negotiate contracts that are in their interest – an assertion most CARICOM governments would reject. It also suggests that CARICOM countries have not encountered similar practices from other countries that have led to uneven contracts – the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union collectively and each CARICOM country individually being a case in point.

What US policy makers should regard as undeniable is that China is giving more scholarships to Caribbean students to upgrade their knowledge and capacity than the US. In fact, the US poaches Caribbean doctors, nurses and teachers – trained at

great expense by Caribbean taxpayers. In the end, if the US continues this practice, they will have only themselves to blame if the Caribbean professionals and influencers of the future know China better than the US.

To be sure, the 13 Congress persons who wrote to the USTR were more concerned about China's relationship with the bigger countries of Latin America than they were about the Caribbean. The Caribbean is usually a forgotten appendage to Latin America among most US policy influencers, including its think-tanks. It is that concern about loss of trade benefits and influence over Latin American markets that caused them to say, "We believe that it is of the highest priority for the US to keep its relationships strong with our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere. Before long, China will be significantly positioned to completely dominate Western Hemisphere economics, as China is already the top trading partner for practical-

ly all of Asia, Oceania, Eastern Europe, Africa and, as stated, most of South America."

If China comes to dominate western hemispheric economics, it will be because of a long period of US neglect and the slow process to recognising that the US must re-engage Latin America and the Caribbean in genuine cooperation, and not with one-sided strategies that are long on words but short on allocation and delivery of funds.

In any event, Latin American and Caribbean countries, concerned about improving their economies and advancing the social and economic conditions of their peoples, do not subscribe to a rivalry between China and the US in their region and hemisphere. They would all declare that there is ample room for economic and other forms of mutually beneficial cooperation with both China and the US.

*(Responses and previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com))*

# Barbados PM holds bilateral talks with US Vice President



*Prime Minister Mia Mottley and United States Vice President Kamala Harris.*

**Barbados Today** - The COVID-19 pandemic, the looming climate crisis and security were the main issues in Prime Minister Mia Mottley's one-on-one talks with United States Vice President Kamala Harris on Wednesday.

The two women leaders, firsts for their respective countries, acknowledged the 55-year-old diplomatic relationship between Bridgetown and Washington and committed to deepening cooperation at a brief press conference ahead of the closed-door hour-long meeting at Harris' office in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, next door to the White House.

Referencing the message of trailblazing American politician of Bar-

badian descent, Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American Congresswoman and the first woman and African American to seek the nomination for the American presidency, Mottley stressed the need for equality of opportunity and the protection of the vulnerable.

"It is the philosophy that still binds us today," she said noting that the US, Barbados and the Caribbean faced common threats and they should therefore "seek to cooperate and work together with respect to tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, fighting the climate crisis, addressing security threats and promoting prosperity as the basis for the engagement".

She told the short brief-

ing that the COVID-19 battle is real for the Caribbean as she reiterated the need for vaccine equity to avoid the risk of more deadly variants emerging.

Mottley then expressed concern that the Caribbean faces serious risk if the world fails to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold for warming at the upcoming COP26 talks in Glasgow, Scotland set for November.

She said: "If that happens, then the conversation has to change seriously to be about adaptation, because we have to adapt to that new reality which can literally be upon us anywhere from 12 to 20 years and, to that extent, therefore, you are dealing with a region that has been constantly

evolving and constantly responding to a one-size-fits-all prescriptions from the establishment of the WTO [World Trade Organisation] that precluded us from benefiting from special and differential treatment, to today where on this climate crisis battle we are on the frontline:

Vice President Harris, the daughter of a Jamaican father who rose to become the first woman and first African-American attorney general in her home state of California on her rise to the highest position ever held by a woman in the US government, agreed that the Caribbean, though not among the world's emitters of greenhouse gases, would be significantly affected by climate change.

She said climate change was one of the biggest threats facing the globe and assured the region of Washington's support

Noting the world is more interdependent than ever, citing the ongoing pandemic and the climate crisis, Vice President Harris pledged that Washington would continue to address the COVID pandemic by supplying more vaccines to the region.

"I think we have donated over a million doses of vaccines to the region with a promise of three million more to the region at least," she said.



# CXC releases data on CSEC, CAPE exams

*Jamaica Gleaner* - The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) on Thursday released data on the performances of students in regional exams administered by the body.

Regarding core Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) subjects, more students received passing grades in English Language than in Mathematics.

Some 74 percent of students who sat English A received grades one to three, while 41 percent of students received a passing grade for math.

Here is a breakdown of performances in other subjects:

- English B - 61%
- Integrated Science - 66%
- Biology - 89%
- Chemistry - 63%
- Physics - 66%
- Electronic Document Preparation and Management (EDPM) - 87%
- Human and Social Biology - 68%
- Principles of Business - 79%
- Information Technology - 89%
- Social Studies - 54%
- Office Administration - 79%

On the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) side, there were high pass



rates in the core subjects of Caribbean Studies and Communication Studies

Some 95 percent of students who sat Caribbean Studies earned grades one to five and 93 percent of students received a passing grade for Communication Studies.

Here's how students performed in other subjects:

- Sociology Unit 1 - 90%
- Sociology Unit 2 - 94%
- Law Unit 1 - 89%
- Law Unit 2 - 86%
- Pure Mathematics Unit 1 - 73%
- Pure Mathematics Unit 2 - 80%
- Chemistry Unit 1 - 92%
- Chemistry Unit 2 - 95%
- Biology Unit 1 - 90%

Biology Unit 2 - 94%

Speaking at the virtual event in Guyana on Thursday, CXC director of operations, Dr Nicole Manning, noted that the performance of Guyanese students in the regional exams was "marginally higher" when compared to other candidates across the region.

Manning said Guyanese students received a 100% pass in 16 CAPE units.

Meanwhile, Manning disclosed that there was a reduction in candidate and subject entries for CAPE.

CAPE also recorded the highest level of absenteeism in the last four

years.

Some 8.3 percent of students did not turn up for exams.

Similarly, there was a high level of absenteeism among CSEC students with 11.23 percent.

Just over 1,200 deferrals for CAPE subject entries were submitted and 15,179 for CSEC.

So far, 4,179 students have registered to sit their exams in January 2022, while 7,720 have opted for June 2022. CXC is awaiting responses from 3,280 students. Registration closes on November 5. CXC results will be released to students later today, Friday 15th October.

# GUYANA: criminal charges could soon be laid against former gov't ministers

*Guyana Chronicle* - A NUMBER of senior officials from the former David Granger-led coalition government could face criminal charges in connection to the transfer of state assets, well after passage of the historic December 2018 No-Confidence Motion.

Attorney General & Legal Affairs Minister Anil Nandlall, SC, in a Thursday interview, acknowledged that while it is the intention of the current People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) government to pursue the development of the country and its people, there is still a commitment to ensuring the actions of the former A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) government are examined.

"There are a number of transactions that were done under the previous government that will be subjected to investigations," the Attorney General said, adding that "Charges may flow if those investigations yield those charges based upon the advice of the Director of Public Prosecution."

Stressing that this is an ongoing process, the Attorney General said there are other things that have diverted the attention of the Guyana Police Force, but his party remains

committed to the promise of investigating the former APNU+AFC government's transactions.

"The police will begin their investigations. The files have been assembled already and they are on their way to the police," Minister Nandlall remarked.

More specific to the matters under investigation, Nandlall said former finance minister Winston Jordan has been implicated in a number of questionable transactions which [the current administration of President Irfaan Ali intends] to send to the Police Force and to other law enforcement agencies.

The AG disclosed that one such matter involves the sale of several vehicles by the Guyana Revenue Authority, without due process, to relatives of a former APNU+AFC government minister.

Additionally, the AG relayed that a number of state properties valued at millions of United States (US) dollars were sold below market value, without public procurement, between the period of the passage of the No-Confidence Motion in December 2018 and the conclusion of the 2020 General & Regional Elections on August 2, 2020.

"I don't think that we've



*Guyana's Attorney-General & Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall.*

even touched the tip of the iceberg," Nandlall cautioned reservedly, referring to the disposal of state lands under the former David Granger-led government.

Noting that there are hundreds of questionable transactions, AG Nandlall disclosed that these lands are particularly essential for Guyana's oil and gas sector, as they are high-value lands located along the oceanfront and on the banks of Guyana's rivers.

"What we are focused on are simply a few [of those lands] in the vicinity of Ogle, and along the East Bank of Demerara," AG Nandlall continued, "But a large part of those transactions have not been handed over to the investigative arm of the state."

Returning to a previous debacle involving the former APNU+AFC government's attempt to conceal an US\$18 million signing bonus paid to the Government of Guyana by Exxon-Mobil in 2016, AG Nandlall said this matter is also ripe for consideration.

He noted further that not only was the money deposited in a Central Bank account authorized in writing by former finance minister Jordan, but it is now unclear where the money has gone.

"I want to assure the public that this is not something we have swept under the carpet," the Attorney General emphatically stressed, adding, "We will continue to persevere in ensuring that these promises are delivered."

# COVID-19: CARPHA concerned over mental health situation in Caribbean

*Press Release* - The rising prevalence of mental health conditions in the Caribbean region is a serious public health concern and, as COVID-19 continues to affect persons across the region, there is need for urgent action to promote good mental health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a “state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”.

World Mental Health Day, observed annually on 10 October, seeks to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health.

This year’s theme – Mental Health in an Unequal World, with the slogan “Mental health care for all: let’s make it a reality” – is an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people.

“Lives have changed considerably due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as we are faced with the realities of unemployment, working from home, closure of schools and not



*Governments are urged to ensure equitable access to mental health services for all who need it.*

being able to socialize as we used to. Over the past year, the pandemic has had a major impact on people’s mental health – especially healthcare and other frontline workers, children, women, families, homeless, people living alone, and those with pre-existing mental health conditions,” stated Dr. Tamu Davidson, Head of Chronic Diseases and Injury at CARPHA.

In the Americas, depression continues to be the leading mental health disorder and is twice as frequent in women as in men. Mental and neurological disorders in the elderly, such as Alzheimer’s disease, other dementias, and depression, contribute to the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Mental disorders can also contribute to unin-

tentional and intentional injury. Patients who are depressed are less likely to take their medicines, and persons with chronic NCDs and disability are more likely to be depressed.

Many mental health conditions can be effectively treated at relatively low cost, yet the gap between people needing care and those with access to care remains substantial. A 2020 survey conducted by the WHO indicated that services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders had been significantly disrupted during the pandemic.

CARPHA supports its Member States through health promotion with a focus on increasing awareness about mental health and strategies to cope with mental illness, targeting the general population,

children and adolescents, the elderly, women, and other vulnerable populations.

Emphasis has been placed on prevention, psycho-social support and coping with mental illness during the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, CARPHA included mental health as a focus of the annual Caribbean Wellness Day. The Agency collaborates with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, and Health Caribbean Coalition, to increase awareness about mental health and reduce stigma.

Achieving mental health care a reality for all, calls for a whole of society approach. Civil society, faith-based organizations and private sector and community-based organizations can support and promote mental well-being

# COVID-19: IMF says quicker vaccinations key to recovery

(AFP) — Accelerating the pace of vaccinations worldwide will be key not just to containing the coronavirus pandemic, but also to resolving the speed bumps besetting the global economic recovery, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said Thursday.

Finance officials gathered for the annual meeting of the Washington-based crisis lender have flagged concerns about supply chain bottlenecks that are pushing prices higher.

Those disruptions stem from the unprecedented situation created by the pandemic and the sharp rebound in demand as economies reopen, as well as struggles to hire workers amid renewed infections from the Delta variant of the coronavirus. But Georgieva said the “more fundamental problem” is the growing divergence between “countries that are pulling forward more strongly, and those that are falling behind,” largely due to the drastically lower vaccination rates in lower-income nations.

“There was a very



*IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva.*

clear message coming out of this meeting that vaccinating the world is critical,” she told reporters.

While advanced countries are starting to provide booster shots, about 96 percent of the population of low-income countries are unvaccinated.

International Monetary Fund members “called for a strong international cooperation and immediate action to achieve universal vaccination,”

said Sweden’s Finance Minister Magdalena Andersson who chaired the IMF’s steering committee.

Georgieva repeated the Fund’s view that inflation pressures are mostly transitory, but the committee stressed that central banks will be watching prices closely and will take action if “concrete” risks materialise.

The committee, in its concluding statement, recognised the risks to the recovery and high-

lighted the need for “immediate action” on vaccinations and to address the crisis that is exacerbating poverty.

The membership also repeated the pledge to “extend financial assistance to countries in need”.

That includes shifting funds from the newly-issued IMF reserves — \$650 billion in special drawing rights — to countries most in need. Georgieva said her \$100 billion goal is “very achievable”.

# Eccentric millionaire Robert Durst given life sentence for murdering best friend



Robert Durst

CNN - Robert Durst – the notorious subject of the HBO docuseries “*The Jinx*”, and who was found guilty last month of first-degree murder – was sentenced to life in prison without parole at his sentencing in a Los Angeles courtroom on Thursday.

The hearing began with the prosecution making arguments after the defense team filed a motion for a new trial. Judge Mark Windham denied the motion. The defense later said they would appeal the decision.

Durst, who has bladder cancer and other physical ailments, did not appear at the verdict but was in court on Thursday slumped in a wheelchair, wearing a mask. He stared ahead at a tablet computer showing the judge’s words as the sentence was read and had no visible reaction.

Durst did not speak after several people gave witness impact statements, but did answer yes when asked whether he would waive his right to appear at the next court hearing.

At the hearing, the victim’s son, Sareb Kaufman, described his mother as “eccentric, vivacious and generous to a fault. Often needy and phobic, a force of nature, but extremely smart and witty.”

Deni Marcus, a lifelong friend of Berman’s, said she was an “absolutely extraordinary, unforgettable, brilliant person whose life was tragically taken from her”.

Durst, 78, was convicted by a jury on September 17 of shooting his best friend Susan Berman in 2000 at her Beverly Hills home, hours before she was set to talk to investiga-

tors about the mysterious disappearance of his first wife, Kathleen McCormack-Durst, who was last seen in 1982.

McCormack Durst was declared legally dead in 2017. Her body has not been found and no one has been charged in the case.

“By telling where Kathie is, perhaps you can find some small redemption in an act of humanity,” Berman’s son urged Durst. “You didn’t just murder Kathie, or Morris (Black, a neighbor), or Susan, you also murdered the person I was – all his dreams and all his hopes, gone.”

A few jurors attended the sentencing, with one telling CNN, “It’s been a long two years.” They declined to comment further.

The eccentric heir to a New York real estate empire, Durst took the stand in his months-long trial and denied killing McCormack-Durst and Berman. He said he found Berman on the floor of her bedroom with a fatal gunshot to the back of the head.

But under cross-examination, Durst testified he would perjure

himself if he had killed them. Prosecutors’ questions also prompted Durst to admit he perjured himself five times during the trial.

In addition, a longtime friend of both Durst and Berman, Nick Chavin, testified the defendant had told him, “It was her or me,” referring to Berman. “I had no choice.”

“Those nine words sum up the entire case,” prosecutor Habib Balian said during closing arguments.

As part of their verdict, jurors agreed the crime met “special circumstances” in California law, which allows for Durst to be sentenced to life without parole, for the murder of a witness to a crime, lying in wait and using a firearm in the murder. California has a moratorium on the death penalty.

Durst’s health has deteriorated significantly over the past few years. He has undergone multiple surgeries, including the insertion of a shunt in his head to relieve pressure on his brain.

He was in coronavirus quarantine in jail at the time the jury announced the guilty verdicts, his attorney said.

# Six arrested in Rwanda for spreading rumours to cause 'uprising'

*Al Jazeera* - Rwandan authorities have arrested six people – including a journalist and members of an opposition party – accused of publishing rumours allegedly intended to start an uprising, the investigation bureau said.

Theoneste Nsengimana – who runs Umubavu TV, an online YouTube channel that often airs content critical of the government – was among those arrested, said Rwanda Investigation Bureau spokesperson Thierry Murangira on Thursday.

“They are accused of publication of rumours intended to cause uprising or unrest among the population,” he said.

“They have commonality. They are an organised group with the intention to spread rumours intended to cause uprising or unrest among the population using different social media platforms.”

Nsengimana’s lawyer did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

On Tuesday, Nsengimana had posted on his YouTube channel video of a woman urging people to celebrate “Ingabire day” on Thursday to honour opposition figures who have been jailed, kidnapped and killed.

Critics have said that Rwandan authorities have been cracking down on critical YouTube channels, including one owned by former university lecturer Aimable Karasira who was arrested in June and charged with denying the 1994 genocide. He denied the charge.

Others arrested include members and supporters of opposition leader Victoire Ingabire.

“Members of DALFA-Umurinzi



*In March, Human Rights Watch voiced alarm about the government's crackdown on people using YouTube or blogs to speak out about sometimes controversial issues in Rwanda.*

arrested again: We request RIB to ensure their rights are respected. We have not yet been informed the reasons behind their arrest,” Ingabire posted on Twitter.

“I take this as intimidation,” she told the AFP news agency. “I don’t know what the rumours they are arrested for are about.”

Ingabire returned from exile in 2010 to run against current President Paul Kagame, but was arrested and jailed for eight years on terrorism charges, a term later extended to 15 years. She was released by presidential pardon in 2018.

Critics have accused Kagame’s government of human rights

abuses, although it has had support from Western donors for restoring stability in the years after the genocide and boosting economic growth.

In March, Human Rights Watch (HRW) voiced alarm about Kigali’s crackdown on people using YouTube or blogs to speak out about controversial issues in Rwanda.

HRW said then that at least eight people reporting or commenting on current affairs – notably the effect of strict anti-COVID measures that have hit the poor hard – have been threatened, arrested or prosecuted in the past year.

Kagame has denied accusations of abuse.

# Brazil soldiers who shot dead a musician convicted



*The case shocked Brazil and led to demonstrations against the military.*

**BBC** - Eight Brazilian soldiers who shot dead a musician and a bystander in a hail of bullets have been convicted of murder.

Evaldo dos Santos Rosa and Luciano Macedo were killed in April 2019 in an incident in which the soldiers fired more than 250 rounds.

Prosecutors believe the troops mistook Mr. Santos Rosa's car for one of the same colour driven by gang members.

The case shocked Brazil, and on Thursday a court handed down long jail terms for all eight men.

They were convicted of murder and attempted murder for the wounds caused to Mr. Santos Rosa's father-in-law in the shooting.

Mr. Santos Rosa's widow, Luciana, said the sentencing "brought peace to my soul".

"I know I won't get my husband back, but it wouldn't be fair to leave here without a positive

outcome," a statement on news site G1 said. "I think I'll be able to sleep today."

Mr. Santos Rosa was driving his family to a performance in Rio de Janeiro's Guadalupe neighbourhood when soldiers fired some 82 rounds into his car. Nine of the rounds reportedly hit Mr. Santos Rosa.

Luciano Macedo, a local rubbish collector, tried to help the family but was himself shot. He died from his wounds 11 days later.

Sérgio Gonçalves, Mr. Santos Rosa's father-in-law, was injured in the attack but survived after more than a week in hospital.

In recent years authorities have put the army in charge of security in the violence-plagued state of Rio, and in 2017 a law was passed putting cases of civilian deaths caused by the military under Brazil's military court system.

President Jair Bolsonaro - the country's right wing, populist leader - dismissed the case in the weeks after the deaths as an "incident".

"The army didn't kill anyone. The army belongs to the people. We cannot accuse the people of murder," he said.

A military court however voted to convict the eight men on Thursday, more than two years after the deaths.

The lieutenant in command received a 31-and-a-half-year sentence, while the other seven were each sentenced to 28 years in jail.

Local media report, however, that the men will appeal to the Superior Military Court. They will not be placed in custody until that body's final decision.



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A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



# Kenya's Agnes Tirop: Husband a suspect as athlete found dead

Kenyan world record holder Agnes Tirop has been found stabbed to death at her home in the western town of Iten, with police treating her husband as a suspect.

The two-time World Athletics Championships bronze medallist, who finished fourth in the Olympic 5,000m final two months ago, was 25.

Last month, Tirop set the world record for a women's only 10km road race in Germany.

A criminal investigation is now underway into her death, with police saying her husband has gone missing.

On Wednesday, crime scene investigators were at the house of Tirop, who police say was reported missing by her father on Tuesday night.

"When [police] got in the house, they found Tirop on the bed and there was a

pool of blood on the floor," Tom Makori, head of police for the area, said.

"They saw she had been stabbed in the neck, which led us to believe it was a knife wound, and we believe that is what caused her death.

"Her husband is still at large, and preliminary investigations tell us her husband is a suspect because he cannot be found. Police are trying to find her husband so he can explain what happened to Tirop."

Makori added that police believe that CCTV in the house may be able to help with their investigation.

Tirop was also found dead with a stab wound to her stomach, sources have told the BBC.

"Athletics Kenya are distraught to learn about the untimely death of World 10,000m bronze medallist Agnes Tirop," the country's



*Kenya's Agnes Tirop broke the world record for a women's 10km road race in Germany in September*

athletics body said in a statement.

"We are still working to unearth more details surrounding her demise. Kenya has lost a jewel who

was one of the fastest-rising athletics giants on the international stage, thanks to her eye-catching performances on the track."

# Ian Smith looking forward to New Zealand's 'grudge match' against Pakistan



*Commentator and former New Zealand cricketer Ian Smith.*

Former New Zealand cricketer Ian Smith believes that the encounter between Pakistan and New Zealand at the T20 World Cup will be a 'grudge match' and he is eagerly waiting for both teams to go head-to-head.

Earlier last month, emotions ran high when New Zealand unilaterally decided to pull out of the series against Pakistan due to 'security threats'.

"It's a bit of a grudge match now on the basis that New Zealand pulled out of the tour over there just recently and came home, which didn't please Pakistan at all," said Smith, according to Stuff, who is also a renowned commentator.

"We were right in doing what we did but it doesn't

ease the pain for them so there will be feeling in that game. It's the first game that we play and I think there will be a real edge to that one so I'm looking forward to it," he further added.

The cancelation of New Zealand's tour had much deeper implications as PCB was tirelessly repairing Pakistan's image on the international stage ever since the 2009 terrorist attack on Sri Lanka's team.

"This conspiracy has been hatched to tarnish the image of Pakistan, as its image was going to build up due to the role it is playing for peace in the region," said Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed.

Pakistan will face New Zealand on October 26 at Sharjah Cricket Stadium.



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# Arsene Wenger to make managerial return vs Lionel Messi's PSG

*Arsene Wenger (in black) dribbles past Zinedine Zidane during a charity match in May 2019.*

Arsene Wenger is to return to the dugout for two charity matches in the next few months.

The 71-year-old has not been in the managerial hot-seat since ending his glittering 22-year stint with Arsenal in 2018, having taken up a role within FIFA as Chief of Global Football Development.

On Wednesday, however, Wenger will be managing during a team of Legends at Marseille's Stade Vélodrome for a charity game organised by Didier Drogba

Former France internationals David Trezeguet, Eric Abidal, Samir Nasri, Robert Pires and Fabien Barthez are all playing, with the proceeds going to UNICEF and the Di-

dier Drogba Foundation.

A second imminent appearance on the touchline for Wenger has also been announced. In January, the former Monaco boss will take charge of a All-Star Saudi Arabian XI against a Paris Saint-Germain side containing Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

The fixture comes during the Ligue One winter break and will be for the Riyadh Season Cup.

Players from Al-Hilal and Al-Nassr will be selected by Wenger for the exhibition.

Though Wenger is extremely busy with his current role at FIFA, last month he hinted he could still manage again in the future.

"I don't rule it out," Wenger told The Telegraph.

"There are always people who say, 'You are too old' so at the time, maybe I thought they were right, but I am in good shape and I have not completely decided not to do it anymore."

Incredibly, one of his last charity match appearances was actually on the pitch and saw Wenger briefly dribble past the legendary Zinedine Zidane.

Although it resulted in an image that was both hilarious and iconic at the same time, footage showed that Zidane regained possession very quickly.



## DEONTAY WILDER HANDLED 6-MONTH SUSPENSION AFTER SUFFERING DEVASTATING KNOCKOUT AGAINST TYSON FURY.

Deontay Wilder has been suspended for six months following his 11th round knockout defeat to Tyson Fury last weekend.

The 35-year-old American was floored three times before eventually being stopped by the Brit and was taken to hospital after the fight.

He was discharged later on Saturday evening with a broken finger and the Nevada State Athletic Commission have now suspended him until April unless he is cleared by a doctor.

Fury has been handed the regulatory 45-day suspension following his victory - his first ever world heavyweight title defence.

Wilder has now suffered back-to-back defeats at the hands of Fury after having previously not lost in 43 fights.

Yet despite the two losses, Wilder's new trainer Malik Scott does not expect the hard-hitting American to retire from the sport.

Scott told iFL TV: "Deontay has set his family financially secure so he doesn't have to

fight to make a living. "But retiring is not in his plans at all and not something we've discussed."

Meanwhile, Fury has now returned to England as he enjoys some time with his family following his sensational win.

It has not been confirmed who the WBC champion will face next, but he is expected to take on mandatory challenger Dillian Whyte in the early part of 2022.

But Whyte remains unsure as to whether Fury will accept a fight against him.

Speaking to Sky Sports News, he said: "Fury has the belt. Wilder had the chance to fight me for three years but didn't. Hopefully now the WBC forces my position and Fury has no choice. It's a massive British fight, a major fight for Britain.

"Fury is an unpredictable man who might say: 'I am done!' I hope we can make a fight when I get past Wallin. But Fury is a difficult guy to plan. I haven't heard a word from him about making a fight."

**DEWS**